DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 788 FL 009 898

AUTHOR Conklin, Mildred; Murphy, Stephen
TITLE Total Immersion Camping.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 14p.; Part of this article appeared in "Foreign Language Annals," v9 n5 1976 and is reproduced with the permission of the publisher

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Camping; Enrichment Activities; High School Students; *Immersion Programs; *Language Instruction; Learning Activities; Learning Experience; Program Development; *Program Planning; Secondary Education; *Second Language Learning

ABSTRACT

A total immersion program at North Rose-Wolcott High School, Wolcott, New York, involves speaking in the target language over a period of hours or days, the assistance of at least one fluent speaker for each six students, and a planned schedule of activities. Programs have varied from activities at the home of a teacher, all-day interaction at school with students from other high schools, an annual overnight in the school, and a weekend at an established camp. All activities have been successful and have led to increased comprehension, fluency, and feeling for the language. Preparations necessary for total immersion camping are outlined. The following sample materials for carrying out the plans are included: preliminary proposal for the administration and Board of Education, letter to families of students, schedule of events, games, list of what to take, contract, and followup report to the Board of Education, 1974. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED163788

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

TOTAL IMMERSION CAMPING

Mildred Conklin and

Stephen Murphy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mildred Conklin

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

In an era when foreign language is being threatened through lack of interest and diminishing enrollment, North Rose-Wolcott High School has developed an effective program to counter this trend. It is a total immersion program which involves the students in speaking the target language over a period of hours or days.

All language students are invited and urged to participate in several Total Immersion experiences during the year. These have ranged from an afternoon of language games and party for first level students to a weekend with 165 people involving 13 schools. The common features are: (1) speaking in the target language, (2) the assistance of at least 1 fluent speaker for each six students, and (3) a planned schedule of activities.

After three years of implementing this program, the language department has become one of the most active in the school. Students demonstrate enthusiastically their desire to master the spoken language and manifest a deeper involvement in overall language and cultural comprehension. More students are taking advanced courses. More students are studying both French and Spanish. Many more students are enrolled for 1976 first level courses. (up by 50%) Language students have also developed a feeling of unity and purpose.

The types of Total Immersion programs have varied, including ones at the home of a teacher, all-day interaction in the school with students from 2 or 3 other high schools, an annual overnight in the school with many other area schools present and a weekend at an established camp. All have been successful and have led to increased comprehension, fluency and feeling for the language.

Experiences away from the home community have definite advantages. Students are more eager to participate if the program involves a trip and problems of chaperonage are minimized when "friends" are out of reach.

Scheduled activities are diversified to maintain the students' interest with alternation of physical and mental activity and some free time for personal interaction. Small group activities such as games patterned after TV shows and skit preparation alternate with such large group activities as skit presentation, singing and folk dancing. Activities must, of course, be planned keeping in mind the physical setting as well as the type of student involved.

FL009898

All students above the first level are invited to participate in these programs. Separate activities or separate programs are planned for first level students. Those who participate require hours of class preparation for such activities. There should be days of conversational practice and special vocabulary study of appropriate words and phrases. Class preparation time is more than balanced by the additional hours of exposure to the language which, on a three day weekend, can by 60 hours.

Resource persons are essential to the success of Total Immersion experiences. They provide diversity of personalities and enrich students' knowledge of culture. Their most important function, naturally, is to help students express their ideas,

thus preventing frustration and making it possible to maintain the speaking of the foreign language. Local colleges are the main source of recruits but any place can find an unexpected wealth of adults eager to share their language abilities with students. Even such small rural villages as North Rose and Wolcott having a combined population of under 2500 have yielded "war brides" from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic; a pair of missionaries returned from Bolivia, a biology teacher with French-Canadian ancestry, an elementary teacher who did practice teaching in French, etc.

As a result of workshops given by the authors, other schools are experimenting with Total Immersion camping. Marilyn Thayer of Mexico, N.Y. took a group of German students for a successful tent camping weekend. The Alleghany County, N.Y. foreign language teachers held a weekend gathering at Wellsville High School with Larry Clark directing, and others are planned. These programs have been so successful that we urge other teachers to experiment with this type of language learning and to share their experiences with their colleagues.

The following comments are taken from student evaluations of their Total Immersion programs: "We liked: small groups of unknown people .... practice in language.... practice in hearing language spoken different ways.... native speakers.... bonfire... informality while learning songs.... skits. We disliked: crowded conditions.... lack of division into ability groups.... bedtime was unnecessary. We learned: words.... better accent.... new people.... increased comprehension.... languages aren't that hard.... to think in another language spontaneously.... how to communicate.... kids do not sleep at night.... people are nicer than we thought we were."

CONTENTS

Part 1 General Introduction

Part 2 Detailed Preparation

Part 3 Samples of Materials Used in Carrying Out Plans

A. Preliminary Proposal for the Administration and Board of Education

B. Letter to Families of Students

C. Schedule of Events

D. Games

E. List of What to Take

F. Contract

G. Follow-up Report to the Board of Education, 1974

Preparations for Total Immersion Camping

Student involvement in carrying out these steps will greatly increase student interest in the activity.

I. Date or dates put on school calendar

II. Decision made as to who will go (1st level?)

III. Location of site

IV. Official Arrangements

- A. Permission from administration and/or Board of Education
- B. Filling out of necessary forms for use of building, buses, etc.

V. Meeting with interested students

- A. Organization of student committees
  1. Fund raising
  2. Food
     - a. Menues
       - 1) Writing by committee
       - 2) Checking by school dietitian who can help decide amounts and, often, contribute government surplus foods
     - b. Shopping and food storage
  3. Activities
     - a. Overall time schedule
     - b. Listing and procural of needed equipment
  4. Publicity
     - a. Photography
     - b. Writing of news stories
  5. Language (careful preparation of lists of words and phrases which should be learned in class before the trip)
  6. Invitation
     - a. Permission slips
     - b. Lists for students of things to bring
     - c. Invitations, if issued to other schools
     - d. Arrangements for mixing students from the various schools if indicated
  7. Rules
     - a. List of rules
     - b. Writing and duplication of a contract for participants to sign
- B. Interested students organized to work up interest among others

VI. Resource people (at least one fluent speaker to each six students)

- A. Recruitment
  1. Community
  2. Nearby colleges
- B. Training of resource people

VII. In-school preparation

A. Use of some class time to make plans

B. Lesson plans making maximum opportunity to talk

C. Much drill on words and expressions listed by Language Committee

D. Playing of language games which will be used on trip

VIII. Safety Check

A. First aid kit and someome competent to use it

B. Life guards if needed

C. Site inspection
   1. Hazardous spots clearly marked off limits
   2. Telephone within reach

IX. Evaluation

A. Simple forms to be filled out by resource personnel and by students as individuals or small groups before the activity has finished

B. Report written for administration and/or Board of Education

X. Publicity before and after trip, including

A. Administration

B. Student body

C. Newspaper

D. Newsletter

A. Preliminary Proposal Submitted to the Administration and to the Board of Education

LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT PROPOSAL

PLAN: The Language Department proposes to take approximately fifty students (30 French and 20 Spanish) along with at least five teachers to Greens' Island in the St. Lawrence River, and to stay there the weekend of October 5-8, speaking only in the languages they are studying.

LODGING: The owners of the island, the VanLiere and Green families, have offered us free use of the heated cottages. Students will take their own bedding.

FOOD: A food committee of students and faculty members will plan menus and purchase food to take with us.

TRANSPORTATION: We are requesting one school bus. The trip is about 200 miles each way.

EXPENSES: It is expected that some funds can be withdrawn from the language club accounts. Expenses beyond this would be divided among those participating.

OBJECTIVES:

1) To foment interest in the study of foreign languages

2) To create an atmosphere of total immersion in the foreign language, therefore

   (a) Increasing interest in and skill in speaking the language, and

   (b) Creating a community of feeling among those studying languages

3) To have fun

B. Letter Sent Home with Students

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRIP

WHAT: An opportunity for foreign language students to be immersed in the language they are studying for an entire weekend

WHERE: The Green and VanLiere families of Wolcott are allowing us to use an island in the St. Lawrence, 200 miles away, near Dundee, Quebec. There are four heated cottages at our disposal.

WHEN: Students will leave from the high school on October 6 at 6:45 a.m. and will return there on October 8 at about 6 p.m.

COST: The cost of the food will be divided among those going. It should not exceed six dollars per person. We will eat lunch in a restaurant at a minimum of two dollars per person.

CLOTHING: The students should come prepared for chilly weather, at least at night. Warm, rugged clothing should be worn and rain gear; coats, boots and hat, should be included. Appropriate clothing should also be brought for Sunday services and a visit to a nearby town.

ALSO NEEDED:

1) An official proof of age such as birth certificate, driver's license or permit. School ID cards are not acceptable, but Sheriff's ID cards will serve.
2) Sleeping bags or bedrolls; air mattress if desired
3) Attached permission slip signed by parent or guardian
4) Lunch including beverage for the Saturday bus trip
5) Soap and towels

MISCELLANEOUS:

1) There will be 5 adult chaperones including Mr. Murphy and Mrs. Conklin.
2) There will be 12 students from Oswego assisting in speaking the languages. Some will be native speakers.
3) No alcoholic beverages or drugs will be allowed except necessary medicines.
4) All students who go must sign a contract agreeing to speak only in the language they are studying from the time they board the bus until they return to school. We ask the parents of students involved to encourage the participants to live up to their agreement. The entire success of the trip is dependent on the fulfillment of this promise

C. Schedule for a Total Immersion Program Held in the North Rose-Wolcott School Building (there were 165 participants)

April 9 - Training session for teachers bringing students

April 23 - 4 p.m. - Assembly in auditorium for explanations in English and signing of contracts. Students will receive cards twlling them what small groups they will take part in.

4:50 - Report to "home rooms."
play pictorial charades to get acquainted

5:30 - Separate French and Spanish punch parties

6:15 - Dinner

7:30 - French to gym and pool
Spanish to auditorium for song learning and skits

10:00 - Bonfires

10:45 - Serenades

11:00 - Quiet time

April 27 - 7:30 - Swim for those who want it

8:30 - Breakfast

9:15 - Small groups for charades, Password, etc., 1/2 hr.
song sessions in small groups

12:15 - Lunch

1:00 - Films

2:00 - Capture the flag and soccer outside or gym and pool inside;
Practice of folk dancing in gym

4:00 - More word games

5:30 - Dinner

6:30 - Small group discussion of the event with a recorder making notes

7:00 - Full group in gym to dance the Hora and say goodbye

D. Games Suitable for T.I.P. Programs

Gossip: Faire le bruit - Murmuracion

Two teams are chosen who stand in rows. The first person of each team is given a sentence. This sentence has to be whispered to the second person in line who passes it on to the third, etc. The last person rushes to a blackboard and writes down the sentence. Points are given for the most correct and the fastest team.

Baffle: Des lettres a mots - De letras a palabras

Two teams play. One member from each comes to the blackboard and is given a word or a short expression (of equal difficulty for the two teams). At a starting signal he puts on the blackboard any three letters and blanks for the other letters. His team immediately starts guessing. At a signal each 10 sec. another letter may be added.

Capture the Flag: La guerra de las banderas - Las guerre des drapeaux

The school gounds will be divided into four or more areas. Everyone will be divided into teams of equal size, all team members being the same language. Each team will have one flag to hide in their territory. Each team will be allowed one guard for their flag who may not stand within 15 feet of the flag. Flag may not be concealed nor may it be within 10 feet of permanent structures or trees. (Object of the game is to capture opponent's flag without losing one's own flags.) Opponents may raid other territories but must surrender to go to jail if they are tagged, with both hands, by a defender.

Each team will maintain a "jail" (no structure) to hold POW's. One guard may be maintained, but not closer than 15 feet. A person may be freed from jail by being tagged by a teammate who has not been tagged. Both may then return to the opposite side, unhindered as long as they do not make any attempts to go deeper into the territory. JAIL must be reasonably close to neutral zone.

Teams must capture their own flag first after losing it. Then they may continue capturing the other teams flags. The team who captures it will place it in their own territory and guard it as their own. The first team to hold all four flags or the one holding the most at the end of the time limit wins.

D. Games Suitable for T.I.P. Programs, cont.

Password: Pase la palabra - Passez le mot

Each team selects two representatives. One member of each team is given a word in the language (the same word for both teams). In turn, they give one word clues to their partners. If the word is guessed on the first try, 10 pts. are awarded to that team. Thereafter the value of the word is diminished by one for each missed try. When the word is guessed two new players for each team come up. The team who reaches 25 pts. first wins.
OPTINAL: In advanced situations, one team could be French, and the other Spanish. This promotes knowledge of both languages.
FACILITATOR: Should be a teacher or native speaker to give out the words.

Charades: Charadas

Divide the group into two teams. Each team agrees upon one phrase or sentence in the target language of not more than six words for each of the opposing team. It is written on a paper and handed to a selected member of the opposite team. A timekeeper gives a starting signal when the actor indicates he is ready. The actor's team immediately starts guessing. If the expression is not guessed within four min., time is called. The scorekeeper records time in seconds for each team. Each team will have someone from the opposite team write on the blackboard the words as they are guessed.

E. List of What to Take

Individuals will need:

1. sleeping bags
2. flashlight (optional)
3. personal articles
4. swim suit
5. towel
6. sneakers
7. suitable outdoor clothing
8. dictionary

Group will need:

1. dictionaries
2. games which can be played without using English
3. records
4. prepared skit in language studied

F. Contract

_____
Date

I promise to do my best to speak only French/Spanish from the time I board the bus until the time I get off back at the school building.

_____
Signature

G. Report Submitted to the Administration and Board of Education after the Total Immersion Weekend

Final Report on Reunion, '74

Reunion '74, a total immersion learning experience for students of French and Spanish was held in North Rose-Wolcott High School from 4 p.m. on April 26 to 7:30 on April 27. About 160 people participated of whom 37 were adults and the rest students, making a ratio of over 1 fluent speaker to each 4 students. Of our own students, 38% of the French and 40% of the Spanish attended, most of them for the full time.

The schedule went through smoothly thanks to the skill and willingness of the visiting teachers, many of whom had attended a training session the previous Tuesday. An integral part of the success of the program was the presence of fluent speakers from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Chile, Colombia, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Quebec, Germany and Italy. Three of those present had done their student teaching in this district.

At the end of our time together, the students divided into groups of 10 and in English, evaluated the program with a recorder for each group. Simultaneously the teachers were doing the same. Samples of both affirmative and negative are on the attached sheet.

We would like especially to extend our very sincere thanks to the Board of Education, the Supervisor and our High School Administrators for permitting and encouraging us in this enormous undertaking. During the preparation we came in contact with a great number of schools and colleges from a number of counties and from our observation you should be very proud of the job you are doing.

Respectfully submitted,

Mildred Conklin
Stephen Murphy